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RUSSIA FILLS THE VACUUM

By Felix Morley

Over a year ago, on June 27, 1945, HUMAN EVENTS published an article entitled "What Unconditional Surrender Means". It pointed out that this policy, so ardently sponsored by President Roosevelt and continued for Germany under President Truman, could have only one outcome. "Unconditional Surrender", this article said, obviously produces a "political vacuum" which must be filled and will be filled by that government agency "most conveniently placed and best prepared for the political operation".

The article, which our readers may check in their files, continued:

> "That agency, obviously, is the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, operating through its ingenious federal formula, giving a large degree of autonomy to satellite Socialist republics not yet formally a part of the Soviet Union, so long as they meet the essential condition of subordination to the general policies of Moscow. To criticize or condemn the Russians for moving into the German vacuum is as idle as it would be to condemn the wind for pouring through an open window. The westward movement of Russia is at least as much the result of our policy of Unconditional Surrender as it is of any imperialistic design on Stalin's part.
>
> "That westward movement will absorb all of Germany, probably permanently, which is not garrisoned by effective American, British and French armies. And if those armies are withdrawn before stable government is built in the districts they hold, these western parts of Germany will also come under Russian control, not because the Kremlin planned it that way but simply because nature abhors a vacuum."

While the accuracy of this diagnosis must now be clear to the most superficial intelligence, no credit for prescience is in order. Anybody with any knowledge of history and any training in political science could as easily have foreseen the Russian effort to take over Germany which is now clearly intended. As a matter of fact, many close students of Russian policy had even earlier warned that this was the outcome to be expected. Thus David J. Dallin, in his book on Russia and Postwar Europe, published by the Yale University Press in 1943, wrote (pp. 209-210):

> "It will consequently be the policy of Soviet Russia, after the defeat of Hitlerism, to see Germany preserved as an

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important European power. Such a state of affairs is demanded not only by prospects . . . of revolutionary Communism, but by realistic policy as understood by Soviet Russia, with her . . . distrust of all allies, and her satisfaction at dissension within the capitalist camp."

II

The Soviet Government, which since its origin has worked steadily in behalf of an allied Soviet German Republic, has rarely concealed that aim. During the war, when Churchill and Roosevelt were maintaining that the only good German is a dead German, the far more intelligent Russian statesmanship was concentrating on the elimination of the Nazi control over Germany. As early as February 22, 1942, when the military picture for Russia looked very dark, Stalin said publicly that:

"It would be ridiculous to identify Hitler's clique with the German people and the German State. History shows that Hitlers come and go, whereas the German people and the German State remain."

And in the same Order of the Day to the Red Army, satirizing the bloodthirsty wartime editorials in American and English newspapers, the Russian Dictator added:

"Sometimes the foreign press engages in the prattle that the Red Army's aim is to exterminate the German people and to destroy the German State. This is a stupid lie and a senseless slander of the Red Army. The Red Army has not and cannot have such idiotic aims."

Again, in November, 1942, presumably weary of Anglo-American obtuseness as to Russian war aims, Stalin reiterated that: "It is not our aim to destroy Germany" and "It is not our aim to destroy all military force in Germany."

Even before this, Stalin had endeavored to make clear to President Roosevelt, obsessed with the disastrous formula of "Unconditional Surrender", that Russian war aims were very different from the meaningless nonsense with which OWI and other propaganda agencies bemused the American public. As the late Harry Hopkins revealed in an important article in the American Magazine for December, 1941, Stalin had told him in Moscow, immediately after the German attack on Russia was launched in June, 1941, that Russian hatred of Hitler "was not a hatred of the German people, nor of the [German] General Staff".

III

It is against this background that one must consider the very important statement made by Foreign Minister Molotov in Paris on July 10, just prior to the adjournment of the last meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers. Of that Russian program, which so shocked Secretary

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Byrnes and millions of less well-informed Americans, the New York Times said, in a plaintive editorial on July 11: "This would mean the permanent partition of Germany and the complete sovietization of the Russian zone even under the central administration to which Russia agrees."

A careful reading of the Molotov statement, against the background of Soviet Russia's constant policy toward Germany, shows that the purpose is not the partitioning but the unification of Germany, and is not the sovietization of the Russian zone alone, but that of Germany as a whole. Of course, the latter aim cannot as yet be openly announced, for it involves withdrawal of the American, British and French armies of occupation. But Russia is patient, and can afford to wait confidently for the day when the American people will grow weary of pouring money into Germany for the dubious pleasure of maintaining a purposeless army of conscripts there.

What Mr. Molotov actually said in his statement is that "it would be incorrect to adopt a course of Germany's annihilation as a State, or that of its agrarianization", as urged by former Secretary Morgenthau. What he said further is that before Russia will consent to writing a peace treaty with Germany "there should be set up a single German Government sufficiently democratic [i.e., Communistic] to be able to extirpate all remnants of fascism in Germany . . ." and what he said emphatically is that:

> "It should now be admitted that the peaceful industries of Germany must receive an opportunity to develop on a wider scale, provided only that this industrial development should really be used to satisfy the peaceful needs of the German people and the requirements of trade with other countries."

And, as a particularly sardonic jab at the bankruptcy of Anglo-American policy, Mr. Molotov emphasized in his statement that "the spirit of revenge is a poor counsellor" in the making of permanent peace.

IV

There can be little doubt that the Governments of the United States and Great Britain have done almost everything in their power to further Russian plans for the development of a German Soviet Republic, allied to and under the protective custody of Moscow. Whether or not this plan bears fruit would seem now to depend primarily on two factors over which the Western Allies no longer have much control.

The first of these factors is the Russian will to develop a Soviet Germany in the near future. On this subject there has certainly been a difference of opinion in Moscow. It has been argued there that German Communism cannot be trusted, and that Russia should strip Germany for the industrial development of the former, rather than unify and support

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a communistically "democratic" Reich as a Russian ally. The Molotov statement indicates that, while an irrevocable policy decision may not yet have been made in Moscow, the advocates of building a strong Soviet Germany are gaining the upper hand.

The second uncertain factor is the attitude of the Germans themselves. Though utterly helpless and broken, the German people are given a certain freedom of choice by reason of the developing antagonism between Russia and the Western Democracies. How they will use this freedom is difficult to predict, for fear and hatred of Russia are still strong in Germany and the preponderant leaning of all of Germany's cultural leadership has for centuries been toward the West.

Because of the depth of German attachment to Western Civilization there is still some hope that a denazified Germany, politically united and eager to follow Anglo-American leadership, may be created. But the chances of this outcome, which would involve American insistence on a just and speedy peace for Germany, grow less daily. Russia, of course, has a tremendous advantage in the fact that a Nazi can become a Communist merely by changing his shirt, while to re-educate the German people in the ways of democracy requires at least some prior indication that Allied objectives are to restore rather than to destroy the basis of German livelihood.

The ruthlessness of British and American post-war policy toward Germany has been so pronounced, the failure to give any encouragement to democratic elements so marked, that the evident growth of Russian influence is understandable. For a people who have lost everything, and to whom the prevalent Anglo-American attitude holds no encouragement, the alternative of subordination to Russia can easily become at least relatively attractive, especially if it is Stalin's settled policy to make it so.

In this connection the chorus of German acclamation for the Molotov statement, as transmitted over the Soviet-sponsored Berlin radio, is significant, the more so because much of it comes from non-Communist German leaders. One can understand the enthusiasm aroused in Berlin by Molotov's placid assertion, so different from the attitude of our own Christian leaders, in regard to the form of Germany's post-war government:

> "We, the Soviet people, hold that it is incorrect to impose upon the German people a solution of this question."

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events VOL. III, NO. 30

By Frank C. Hanighen July 24, 1946

Before President Truman vetoed the compromise OPA bill on June 29, Government economists told him that, OPA or no OPA, prices would rise. They were more honest than a year ago when, with their thinking affected by political factors, they predicted deflation and mass unemployment. The OPA experience has pointed many lessons -- depending on who did the pointing and whose political ox was gored. But one conclusion has received insufficient notice: politically tainted statistics are dangerous to the country.

Government economists resorted to political expediency last fall and produced phony charts to support their alarmist statements. The Administration, chilled to the bone by forecasts of deflation, encouraged labor unions to demand huge wage increases -- and the consequent inflationary pile-up of strike-strangled production, higher costs and inevitably higher prices contributed to the present OPA muddle. Today, a wrangle is going on as to whether a political or non-political economist should be named head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. There should be little question, if the following story is heeded.

After V-J Day, Government economists made some wondrous forecasts. Those assigned to OPA predicted that unemployment might reach 10 million by June of this year. The Social Security Board chimed in with assurance of between 5.5 and 7.5 millions unemployed by the end of 1945; the War Manpower Commission was more modest; 5.7 millions in the last quarter of 1945. But it is not generally known that the political economists at the top received contrary opinions from subordinates. Some WMC economists did not wish to go on record, because they believed their figures were shaky. And a Mr. Wladimir Woytinsky, Principal Consulting Economist to the Social Security Board, said no deflation was indicated and he "hit it on the nose" with a prophecy of 2.7 million unemployed by December, 1945. But the "politicos" ignored -- had to ignore -- this advice. For their fake figures were necessary to build up a scare, and the scare was essential to supporting their demands for Congressional funds.

Meanwhile, private business economists covered themselves with glory. This column has before it the forecasts of a firm which by October, 1945, saw a tight labor market and a sellers' market in merchandise. Another company in November, 1945, anticipated an increase in its sales of 49 per cent; this turned out to be 53 per cent. Other publicized predictions by Business were later confirmed by events.

It does not follow from this tale that a St. Bartholomew's massacre of Government economists should be staged, and all economic analysis left to the tender mercies of Business. Many private business economists went the way of all flesh in the years 1929-32, and may again. Therefore those who look to the Government for reliable statistical advice are banking on the Bureau of Labor Statistics to lead the way. BLS has a good, although not perfect record. A. F. Hinrichs, able and honest BLS chief, has just resigned. Perhaps the mute, unsung Mr. Woytinsky, who called the turn on unemployment, might prove a candidate for the job of producing honest figures.

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Three months ago, Opposition elements in Bolivia approached American authorities and asked whether or not the United States would recognize them if they overthrew the Government in La Paz. They also wanted to know if Washington would send food, because otherwise they would have to depend on Argentina. Washington's answer

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is unknown. Two days ago, a revolt simmering for weeks came to a climax with the brutal murder of President Villaroel, the overthrow of his Government and installation of a new civilian regime.

The geo-political soil from which such political events grow is well described in Professor John A. Crow's currently published book The Epic of Latin America (Doubleday, Doran) a very readable and thoughtful book on the development and potentialities of our southern neighbors. Bolivia he calls "a weak and disunited nation living without an outlet to the sea. Her people inhabit the bleak and high altiplano or live clustered on small isolated intermontane strips which lie athwart the great back of the Andes. The two-thirds of the country which is lowland is not "effective national territory". The population is 55 per cent pure Indian and about 32 per cent mestizo. Poverty, malnutrition, and disease are chronic symptoms of Bolivian life. Fertile land is at a premium and communications are almost nonexistent. In this weak and divided nation, the civil authority lacks the force of concentrated public opinion to make those guarantees on which progress and democracy are dependent."

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The defeat of Senator Wheeler in the Montana primaries is a serious portent for the future of the American Labor movement, say real liberals in Washington who believe that the loss of Labor support was more important than the foreign policy issue among the causes of Wheeler's defeat. The veteran Montanan has a perfect record in voting on Labor bills, in the view of non-Communist union officials. But he offended the left-wing of organized Labor by his consistent criticism of Soviet Russia; and the CIO-PAC-Communist organization engaged in a violent smear campaign against him in the important industrial areas of the State. One of the most disturbing developments of this successful drive against Wheeler was the fact that it influenced some portions of railway labor; formerly strong supporters. NMG on May 29 called attention to the infiltration of Communist influence in this hitherto conservative wing of Labor. This factor operated in the rail strike last May; and President Truman's inside knowledge of the situation provides one explanation why he publicly reminded Montana voters that Wheeler deserved railway labor support. The strength of the CIO-PAC, which has suffered some loss of prestige recently, evidently cannot be entirely discounted.

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The non-porous qualities of the "iron curtain" are vividly illustrated in reports brought to this column by American diplomats who recently visited Vatican City. The Vatican has rightly enjoyed great prestige for its "intelligence service" and the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations have quite naturally wanted to tap the great fund of inside information which traditionally flowed into its files from all over the world. But now, it appears, the Pope's pipe lines of information have been cut off in most of Eastern Europe. Today, when an itinerant newspaper man or secular diplomat drops into Rome from those parts, his opinions are eagerly sought by the Holy See.

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Wind-up of the Pearl Harbor probe with publication of the Majority and Minority Reports leads to one important conclusion by shrewd political observers: that the Democrats did a better job than the Republicans. The sophisticated do not argue about which report will best stand the test of time; they believe that the Minority was closer to the truth in placing the responsibility, not on Kimmel and Short, but on the White House and its commanders in Washington. However, that is not the point, say these observers, who add that the investigation was conducted by the Democratic

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Majority to "whitewash" the Administration in the eyes of the public; by the Minority to pin the blame on the Administration. The Democrats -- partly because they had predominant power as the majority on the committee, but partly also because they worked more efficiently -- substantially obtained their objectives. By effective tactics, they succeeded in confusing the evidence. Few people even now realize that Mr. Roosevelt the day before Pearl Harbor knew and said that war was certain; and yet did nothing to warn commanders at the outposts. This was unshaken testimony in the investigation. But the Democrats successfully threw enough dust in the eyes of the masses. The important corollary is that there's still "life in the old donkey", and that the Republicans have a very defective system of organization and strategy.

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One decision recently handed down by the Supreme Court suggests that the currently accepted division of the Court into "liberals" and "conservatives" may be inaccurate; and that a new alignment is developing. Justices Rutledge and Murphy in their dissenting opinions in the Homma and Yamashita cases took a stand against the "revenge" attitude which underlies the war criminal trials in Germany and the Far East. On June 10, these twain again dissented from a majority decision written by Justice Douglas, in the case of the revocation of the citizenship of Paul Knauer, member of the former German-American Bund. Douglas is usually bracketed with Justice Black as a leader of the "liberal" wing of the Court.

Justice Rutledge in his decision (Murphy concurring) obviously believes that the majority on the Court has established a precedent extremely dangerous to our American tradition. He sees the Court setting up a standard of "second-class citizenship". Previously naturalized citizens enjoyed all the Constitutional rights of native-born citizens, save the privilege of serving as President. As a result of the Knauer decision, naturalized citizens today can lose their citizenship because of political activities, while native-born citizens are exempt from this liability. There is no reason why this Supreme Court rule could not be applied to a naturalized citizen who is a member of the Communist Party; or even to an Englishman who becomes a naturalized citizen and joins the St. George Society.

Perhaps the line-up - Black-Douglas "liberal" versus Frankfurter-Jackson "conservative" wings -- is fictitious. The true split may be something different: Rutledge and Murphy may be the rallying point for those who adhere to principle as against a majority swayed by political expediency.

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Mr. Herbert Hoover deserves much credit for an unpublicized piece of behind-the-scenes diplomacy. This action certainly went far toward preventing a further decline in United States-Argentine relations, and may have provided the foundation for a rapprochement -- unless such a healing process is blocked by the Braden clique. When the former President of the United States was in Buenos Aires last month, he paid a visit to President Perón. The latter talked as much about international politics as about food problems. One matter especially angered Perón: the fact that Argentine funds in the United States were still frozen. Although the war was over, Washington had not lifted this control. The Argentine President not only made his displeasure plain to Mr. Hoover, but also intimated severe counter-measures against American business.

When Mr. Hoover returned to Washington, he presented this picture of Perón's state of mind to President Truman, who promised to rectify the injustice. Mr. Hoover also talked to Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson about these matters. Following these conversations the State Department announced the release of the bulk of Argentine funds.

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Notes and Quotes

"One day a Russian, a Frenchman, an American and an Englishman were looking round an aquarium when suddenly out of a tank jumped four gold-fish. The Russian immediately stamped on one of the fish and killed it outright; the Frenchman stooped down, picked up one of the others, put it in his pocket and took it home for supper; the American merely disregarded the fish that landed next to him; the Englishman picked up the fourth fish, gently dusted it, put it back in the tank and then proceeded to drain off the water. This German comment on the different attitudes of the four occupation Powers to their various zones was going the rounds of the university town of Göttingen recently." From an article "In the British Zone", by Norman Paterson, in the London Spectator (May 31).

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Almost a year after V-J Day, 2,100 conscientious objectors remain in American prisons. Not only the signers of a recent letter published in the New York Times (July 14) -- including Dorothy Canfield Fisher, novelist, and former American Legion figure Cyrus Leroy Baldridge -- but many others feel concern about this state of affairs. It is perhaps not widely known that of these 2,100, three-fourths are Jehovah's Witnesses, and the rest include religious and political objectors of various kinds. Some are undoubtedly "crackpots" or psychotics, but all are sincerely convinced of the rightness of their stand against military service or other forced Government. This situation in the United States stands in contrast with that in England, where all but 26 objectors have been freed. The letter to the Times asks President Truman to declare an amnesty for these individuals and pertinently says, "Obviously the conscientious objectors are not criminals and do not belong in prison. However we may regard their ideals, they acted from the highest motives, and their continued punishment violates our precious heritage of freedom of conscience and religion and speaks ill for the state of civil liberties after a war fought in the name of the Four Freedoms."

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The show at Nuremberg today plays to a more critical audience, as may be gathered from the following acidulous comment of Mr. E. W. P. Veale in the London Peace News (May 31): "That the victors' conduct is far from unsullied is common knowledge; yet the 'Trial of War Criminals' deals with offences from one side only. Thus Admiral Doenitz is confronted with the 'murder' of 30,000 British able-bodied seamen on the high seas in wartime, mostly sailing in strongly protected convoys; and as much on active service as any crew of a tank or battleplane. But the commander, whose men in one night slew 25,000 hapless refugees, mostly women and children, in the open city of Dresden, is not called upon to defend this massacre of defenceless non-combatants, the weak, the sick and the aged.

"That such a blatant contrast between the penalization of the vanquished and the immunity of the victors will act as a deterrent in the next war is in the highest degree improbable."

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If Mr. Byrnes should end his career as Secretary of State tomorrow (and we would indeed deplore such an event), it is doubtful if students of his official papers could find any utterance more wise and constructive -- and less noticed by those who should heed the advice -- than the following sentence from his speech of July 15, 1946: "In the long run we shall have a much better chance to work out our problems if we and our Allies recognize the basic differences in our ideas, standards and methods, instead of trying to make ourselves believe that they do not exist or that they are less important than they really are."

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